AFRICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING SUMMARY

by the child rapporteurs Tara and Kamsi

New Optional Protocol to the CRC on Free Pre-Primary and Secondary Education

On 16 December 2025, children from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, South Africa, Nigeria, Cameroon and The Gambia participated in a consultation to share their ideas and priorities regarding the new Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on free pre-primary and secondary education. The consultation was led and facilitated by the Children's Advisory Team of Child Rights Connect.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

What does **education** mean to you?

What **makes it hard** for children in your country to go to school?

- It costs too much (fees, uniforms, transport).
- There are no materials or safe spaces or the school is far away.
- Sometimes, boys are sent to school instead of girls.
- In some places, war makes it difficult to study and maintain schools.

When children **can't go** to school...

...it causes and fuels many other problems in a country. This is why sharing ideas is helpful for everyone to understand the importance of the new Optional Protocol. The more people know, the more they join in. Together, we can all make a difference!

To support the development of this **new optional protocol**, children can...

- Speak up and share ideas through platforms and consultations, including with decision-makers in their countries.
- Share and learn about success stories why preprimary and secondary education is important for all children.
- Spread awareness about the new Optional Protocol in their own circles and communities.

IDEAS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

"Education is a right, not a privilege, so nobody should be discriminated."

"It's not just about exams—it's about learning, growing, and shaping the future."

"We all need to work together so no child is left behind."

" Children should be supported when they voice their opinions on issues that concerns them, like education."

CAT Children's Advisory Team

FOR MORE INFORMATION. EXPLORE HERE